

State of the Heart For African-Americans

Cardiovascular Disease in South Carolina



Burden of Disease:

- In the United States, over 100,000 African-Americans die each year from cardiovascular disease (CVD), which includes heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, and other diseases of the circulatory system.
- CVD is South Carolina's leading killer for both men and women among all racial and ethnic groups. During 2003, 3,839 African-Americans died from CVD in South Carolina.
- African-Americans face higher risks of developing ischemic heart disease and suffer stroke deaths more often than do Caucasians. These higher illness rate results in ten years of lost life for African-Americans in South Carolina and a stroke mortality rate that was 24 percent higher than the national average in 2002.
- Heart disease and stroke accounted for 14,177 hospitalizations in 2003 for African-American South Carolinians, with a total hospitalization cost of more than \$368 million.

Risk Factors for South Carolinians

Smoking

- Cigarette smokers have a 70 percent greater chance of dying of heart disease than nonsmokers.
- One out of every four African-American adults in South Carolina smokes.

Overweight

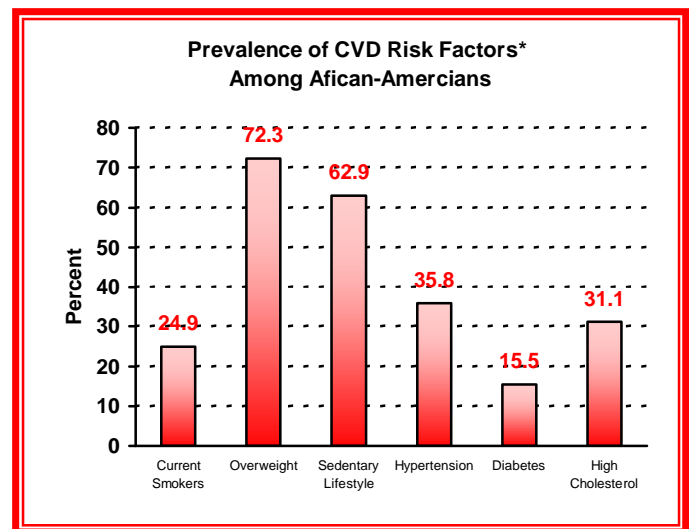
- Being overweight contributes to 32 percent of heart disease each year.
- Over 70 percent of African-Americans in South Carolina are overweight or obese. For African-American women, the number is three out of every four.

Sedentary Lifestyle

- Less active, less physically fit persons have a 30 to 50 percent greater risk of developing high blood pressure.
- When it comes to physical activity in South Carolina, almost two out of every three African-Americans are either inactive or are not regularly active.
- Physical inactivity is more common among African American women than men.

Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)

- People with hypertension (high blood pressure) have three to four times the risk of developing heart disease than those without high blood pressure
- One in three African-Americans in South Carolina has high blood pressure.



*Data Source: South Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2003

Diabetes

- Two-thirds of people with diabetes die of heart disease or stroke.
- One out of every six African-American adults in South Carolina has diabetes, which is double the rate for Caucasian adults.

High Cholesterol

- Lowering blood cholesterol results in a two-fold reduction of heart disease risk.
- Nearly one in three African-Americans in South Carolina has high cholesterol.

Estimated Economic Cost of CVD in the United States in 2005
\$241.9 billion in direct costs (i.e., physicians, hospital, medications)
\$151.6 billion in indirect costs (i.e., loss in productivity)

Stroke Among African-Americans in South Carolina



Burden of Disease for South Carolinians:

- Stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States.
- South Carolina had the second highest stroke death rate in the nation in 2001 and is among a group of Southeastern states with high stroke death rates that is referred to as the “Stroke Belt.”
- Stroke is the third leading cause of death for African-Americans in South Carolina, resulting in 873 deaths during 2003.
- African-Americans are more than 50 percent more likely to die from stroke than Caucasians in South Carolina.
- Stroke resulted in 2,930 hospitalizations for African-Americans in South Carolina during 2003.

Modifiable Risk Factors for Stroke:

- High blood pressure
- Cigarette smoking
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Poor eating habits
- Physical inactivity

How to Reduce Your Risk of Stroke:

- Get your blood pressure checked.
- Stay active.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Use less salt.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation.
- Get your cholesterol level checked.
- Stay smoke-free.

WARNING SIGNS OF STROKE:

- Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg on one side of the body.
- Loss of speech or trouble talking or understanding speech.
- Sudden dimness or loss of vision, particularly in one eye.
- Unexplained dizziness, unsteadiness or sudden falls, with no previous symptoms.
- Sudden, severe headaches with no known cause.

Economic Cost of Stroke:

- Hospitalization costs of stroke totaled more than \$70 million for African-American South Carolinians in 2003.
- The total cost of stroke in the United States for 2005 is estimated at \$56.8 billion (both direct and indirect costs).

For more information on cardiovascular disease prevention in South Carolina contact:

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Information for this fact sheet was obtained from S.C. BRFSS, S.C. Vital Records, S.C. Hospital Discharge Data, American Heart Association, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.